

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending as of the Office Action of March 14, 2008. In this Office Action the Examiner requires Applicant to elect a single group to which the claims shall be restricted under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

Particularly, the Examiner identifies:

Group I: Claims 1-9; and

Group II: Claim 10.

In reply to the restriction requirement, Applicants herein elect Group I, Claims 1-9, and withdraws claim 10. However, Applicant respectfully notes that, as of the Preliminary Amendment filed on April 27, 2006, there are 13 claims (1-13) pending in this Application, as opposed to the 10 claims (1-10) indicated by the Examiner. As claims 11 and 13 depend from elected claims 6 and 2 respectively, Applicant further and respectively elects claims 11 and 13 with Group I. Similarly, as claim 12 depends from withdrawn claim 10, Applicant respectfully withdraws claim 12 from the Application. Of course, Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue the withdrawn claims in a related application(s) without prejudice.

Applicant further acknowledges the Examiner's discussion of Reference "x" at page 3 of the Application, and looks forward to addressing any alleged rejection over reference "x" or any other alleged prior art in subsequent Actions on the merits. However, a restriction requirement/response is not the forum for such a discussion. Accordingly, with the above election/withdrawal, Applicant in no way admits that any claim is anticipated or obvious over reference "x."

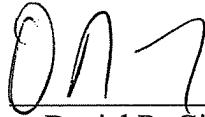
Prosecution on the merits is respectfully requested. The foregoing is believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the below-listed phone number regarding this Response or otherwise concerning the present application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time necessary under 37 C.F.R. §§1.136(a) or 1.136(b).

If there are any charges due with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicant's attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,
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